



Influence of Lecturer-Management Conflict on Job Performance Effectiveness of University Lecturers in Cross River State, Nigeria

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This study investigated the influence of lecturer- management conflict on job performance effectiveness of university lecturers in Cross River state, with regards to research and community service. One research question and one research hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The population comprises 1,369 lecturers. The stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample of 240 university lecturers. The survey research design was adopted for the study. Data for the study was collected using the Lecturer- Management Conflict and Job Performance Effectiveness Questionnaire (LMCJPEQ). The data was analyzed using One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical technique. From the result of findings, it was recommended chiefly that university management should be proactive in meeting the needs of lecturers in areas like research grants approval, conferences and training aids, payment of honorarium and so on, since these are the key areas that ignite the conflict between lecturers and management.

INTRODUCTION

Universities by establishment are expected to be focused in accomplishing specific goals. The Federal Republic of Nigeria articulates the objectives of university education to include the contribution to national development through relevant manpower training, the acquisition, development and inculcation of proper values for the development of intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate the local and external environments.^{1,12}

The nature and character of universities as academic organizations stipulate the enhancement of a harmonious environment which remains conducive for the cooperation and togetherness of diverse groups of employee and the core management cadre for the realization of set goals.¹³ Recently, the Nigerian educational system has been saturated with several dimensions of conflicts in its industrial relations atmosphere which impede the advancement of knowledge.

University lecturers the world over are meant to achieve stipulated goals by undertaking their tasks of teaching, research and community service.¹¹ It is the level of job performance effectiveness of academic staff that determines the degree of goal achievement; this is more so since a university system would hardly rise above the level of its lecturers. Unfortunately, the restive and conflicting nature of the universities in Nigeria especially manifested in the conflict between the lecturers and the university management tend to impede research and community service effectiveness of lecturers.

Job effectiveness in this study is narrowed down into research and community service. This is the extent to which the university lecturers

attain a level of accomplishment in these areas. The scourge of job ineffectiveness among lecturers has eroded deep into the foundation of the Nigerian universities. This study therefore examines the influence of lecturer- management conflict on job performance effectiveness of university lecturers in Cross River state, with regards to research and community service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nigerian universities have for decades been faced with so many crises ranging from conflict between academic staff and university administrators, students versus academic staff, students versus university authorities, non-academic staff versus university administrators. The conflicts have given rise to distrust and hostility among professionals and academics, thus, contributing in hampering smooth, effective and efficient administration in the universities.²

The conflict between lecturers and management is associated with many factors. Central among them is the approach and manner in which educational resources; (especially human, physical and financial resources) are being managed by the school administrators.³ Resources management is the effective and efficient development of organization's resources when they are needed.

Akpan,⁴ carried out a study "to find out the relationship between resource management and job involvement of university lecturers in the South – South zone of Nigeria. Four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The sample of the study consisted of 578 lecturers selected from a population of 2894 lecturers from 3 universities using stratified proportionate random sampling technique". He added that "the instrument for data collection was a 4-point Likert type scale developed by the researcher and titled Resource Management and Job Involvement

Questionnaire (RMJIQ) for lecturers". Again, "reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.75, using the split-half reliability method. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and population t-test statistical methods. The results of the study revealed that lecturers' perception of human, physical/material and financial resources management significantly correlated with their job involvement". "The result of the study further showed that the job involvement of university lecturers was significantly high. Premised on these findings, it was recommended among others that university administrators should adopt strategic planning/ management process in the management of human, physical/material and financial resources and academic staff in Nigerian universities should be adequately motivated so as to enhance their job involvement and commitment to duty".

Studies have also shown that effective management of human resources in an organization significantly related to job involvement and high productivity. These studies bear relevance to this work in that most management-lecturer conflict result from the lecturer's perception of the manner in which university administrators manage the resources which are ordinarily scarce. Poor motivation of lecturers by management generates conflict which negatively influences lecturers' job effectiveness in universities.⁵

According to Ndum and Okey,⁶ the leadership styles employed by the organization or management are seen to determine results. For example, an autocratic leader used coercion rather than persuasion to achieve his goals. In line with this, Ogunnaike, Taiye, Sholarin and Ezeugwa⁷, carried out a study to examine the effect of total quality management on lecturers and the corporate image of universities in Nigeria. Their research was based on the data collected from the students of selected private and public universities in Nigeria through the administration of questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed, the findings showed that quality input management has an effect on lecturer's performance and perceived corporate image, quality output management has an effect on perceived corporate image, there is no difference between private and public universities as regards their total quality management and how lecturers perceive corporate image. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the concerted efforts of the stakeholders must be harnessed and geared towards improving the quality standards of Nigerian universities.⁷

Ekundayo,² conducted a study to examine the "various causes of conflicts between the lecturers and the university managements". The findings showed that "poor funding of the system, poor condition of service, and bad leadership style of university administrators" could ignite tension and conflict between lecturers and the university management. The study further indicated that underfunding was a factor responsible for disputes involving Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigerian universities.

Practical conflict occurrences abound in several Nigerian universities. These conflicts are capable of affecting job performance effectiveness of lecturers. In 2005 there was a serious conflict that occurred in Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU) Ago-Iwoye, involving lecturers, students and the host community. This led to the killing of students by the members of the host community, 50 vehicles were completely vandalized and the palace of the monarch of the town was burnt⁹.

The management of universities has so much to do to ensure smooth running of the universities. The policies formulated need to be appropriately implemented. Whenever management fails in this duty, it brings disagreement with the lecturers. A greater percentage of the operations of the university are determined by the university

management and the level of teaching, research and community service effectiveness of lecturers is tied to management approach.

In Nigeria today, there is a gradual decline in the standard, output, quality and frequency of educational publishing, being the accompanying measure of scholarly research. Whenever there is conflict resulting to the closure of the university, the lecturers find it really difficult to publish especially in international journals. Lecturers who are not willing to perish in the academic pursuit have made further efforts. Several journals have come up in Faculties and Departments in most Universities across the nation. In most cases, some collapsed without going beyond the initial volumes either due to poor subscription and funding, or contradictions within the system. On the latter, as soon as the editors and their closed ones had published for themselves and achieved their required aim, they stop patronising and sustaining the journal.

Nigerian lecturers lag behind and are unable to close the development gap through quality, cutting-edge researches aiming at creating new knowledge and deepening and expanding researches for sustainable development.⁸ Not much is recorded of ground-breaking researches in Africa and in particular, Nigeria.⁹ Could this trend be linked to prevailing dimensions of conflict, such as when management fails or delays approval of research grants?

This study therefore ascertains if the manifestation of research and community service ineffectiveness of lecturers may have been caused by the scourge of lecturer-management conflict in the system.

Statement of the problem

It is a truism that Nigerian universities for decades now have been faced with several crises. The outcry of stakeholders in the educational system such as parents, students, lecturers, administrators, host communities, public as well as private domains and observation of the researcher on the growing research and community service ineffectiveness of some university lecturers informed this study. In an attempt to carry out their tasks, lecturers are faced with conflicting situations on regular basis. Engendered by the realities of the system, they disagree with management on work related issues.

Nigerian lecturers lag behind in research and community service and are expected to close the development gap through quality, cutting-edge researches aiming at creating new knowledge and deepening and expanding researches for sustainable development. Could this trend be linked to prevailing dimensions of conflict, especially when management fails or delays approval of research grants? How does conflict between lecturers and management influence job performance effectiveness of university lecturers? This study is aimed at providing answers germane to these questions.

Purpose of the study

This study examined the influence of lecturer- management conflict on job performance effectiveness of university lecturers in Cross River state, with regards to research and community service. Specifically, this study aimed at:

Ascertaining the influence of lecturer-management conflict on lecturers' job performance effectiveness

Research question

This study was guided by the research question below:

Does lecturer-management conflict influence lecturers' job performance effectiveness?

Table 1

One way analysis of variance of lecturer-management conflict and job performance effectiveness

Variables	Category	N	Mean	SD		
Community service effectiveness	Low	131	15.64	3.43		
	Moderate	45	17.69	3.25		
	High	64	18.33	2.10		
	Total	240	16.74	3.50		
Research effectiveness	Low	69	4.09	.36		
	Moderate	32	3.33	.49		
	High	139	3.04	.38		
	Total	240	3.97	.258		
	Source of variance	Sums of square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Community service effectiveness	Between groups	362.30	2	181.148		
	Within groups	2562.17	237	10.811	16.76	.000
	Total	2924.47	239			
Research effectiveness	Between groups	5533.296	2	266.620		
	Within groups	3245.257	237	13.693	19.471	.000
	Total	3778.496	239			

*significant at .05 level; df=2 and 237; p-level=.000

Statement of hypothesis

The null hypothesis formulated to guide this study is stated as follows:
There is no significant influence of lecturer – management conflict on lecturers' job performance effectiveness

METHOD

The survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised all the lecturers in the two public universities in Cross River State, that is, the University of Calabar and the Cross River University of Technology. The stratified sampling technique was used to select two hundred and forty (240) lecturers from the two universities proportionately. A self-constructed Lecturer- Management Conflict and Job Performance Effectiveness Questionnaire (LMCJPEQ) was used to collect data. The questionnaire had three sections. Section A sought personal and demographic information of respondents. Section B had 42 items on organizational conflict. Section C had 12 items which measured variables on community service and research effectiveness. Each variable was measured by 6 items. Each item carried four options. These are "Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)". The instrument was validated by experts in Test and Measurement Department in the University of Calabar. The reliability of the instrument was established through Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate which yielded co-efficient values from 0.72 - 0.92. The data obtained were statistically analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) at.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

RESULTS

Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of lecturer – management conflict on lecturers' job performance effectiveness. The result in table 1 showed a significant mean differences between the groups (df=2, 237; F =16.76, p <.05) community service effectiveness and (df=2, 237; F =19.47, p <.05) for research effectiveness, both results revealed that lecturer-management conflict had significant influence on community service effectiveness and research effectiveness among lecturers in Cross River state.

DISCUSSION

The result above showed a significant mean difference between the groups for community service and research effectiveness. It revealed that lecturer-management conflict had significant influence on community service effectiveness and research effectiveness among university lecturers in Cross River state.

The result indicated that the conflict between university lecturers and management is capable of affecting the job effectiveness of lecturers with respect to their community service and research roles. The lecturers work in the same environment with the university management, they make demands from the management and expect that their needs be met. Whenever the lecturers realize that the university management is not committed enough especially as it relates their welfare, they tend to be dissatisfied, a situation which creates friction and undue conflict between lecturers and management. This is in consonance with the view of Fabiyi,¹⁰ who examined lecturers' welfare and job effectiveness and found "a significant relationship existing between teachers' condition of service, fringe benefits and their teaching effectiveness. Recognition, salaries, welfare packages and office accommodation significantly related to lecturers' commitment to teaching, research and community service". He concluded that refusal of university management to provide these needs would eventually result in conflict.

Similarly, the leadership style of the university management is capable of determining the nature of relationship between lecturers and management. A proactive, participatory and people oriented leadership style can go a long way to curtail the level of conflict between lecturers and management and thereby enhance lecturers' job effectiveness in relation to community service and research. This view is supported by Ndum and Okey,⁶ who opined that "management styles employed by the organization could determine whether the conflict will be subdued or aggravated. For example, an autocratic leader will use coercion rather than persuasion to achieve his goals. If the calibres of the ideologies of Karl Marx who believed in radicalism are the Union Leaders, then the organization runs a risk of heading for precipice". They added that "extent to which lecturers are willing to cooperate and work effectively with their school heads, depends to a large extent on the administrative behaviour of the university management. In autocratic style of

leadership, there is less creativity, absence of effective communication, lower morale, lack of trust, unilateral decision-making, etc; while in democratic style of leadership, there is higher degree of initiative, morale, staff participation in decision-making and cordial interpersonal relationship between the leader and the subordinates, thereby giving teachers a feeling of personal dignity, worth, self-respect, self-esteem, commitment and dedication.

Job performance effectiveness of the university lecturers “is a function of positive leadership, that is, quality of leadership which the management is giving to motivate and inspire other staff to adapt. It is expected that such staff should be able to adapt so as to be able to achieve and maintain individual and organizational goals. In other words, it is the ability to get all members of the university community to work together towards the achievement of the excellent goal of the education of all the students”. University management should be involved in motivating and directing lecturers to exert their energy in the realization of institutional objectives.

In another vein, as a result of the lecturer-management conflict the training and development programme for lecturers are not forthcoming. Community service and research effectiveness require well-organized and systematic professional skills which can be made evidenced through diverse training and staff development initiatives of the university management. Again, the lecturer- management conflict in most cases arises when lecturers realize that the university management does not initiate nor support any training or development programmes for academic staff. The educational system cannot be positioned above the quality of her teachers anywhere in the world. Thus the growth and development of skill- based courses in any country of the world largely depend on the quality and adequacy of teachers in these areas of professional endeavour. This is why Gidado in Ogunnaike, Sholarin, and Ezeugwa⁷ indicated that the major problems of teacher education in Nigeria was that the teachers that were being trained were not sufficiently prepared “to meet the complex demand of the teaching profession in Nigerian schools”. It is an educational truism that a teacher could only teach what he or she knows. To them, “lack of continuous professional development for faculty members means that many are stuck with archaic pedagogical approaches, obsolete course content and irrelevant theoretical frameworks, some of which may have been disproved, updated or discarded”. It is on this note that this research is poised to ascertain the effect of quality process management on perceived corporate image of Nigerian universities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was shown that the conflict between lecturers and management adversely affect community service and research performance effectiveness among university lecturers in Cross River state.

Recommendations

From the result of findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. Lecturers must realize the central place they occupy in the university system and should therefore utilise their wealth of knowledge and experience to ensure effectiveness in the performance of their prescribed tasks of research and community service. They should resolve conflict with management amicably in order to have a peaceful working environment.
2. University management should be proactive in meeting the needs of lecturers in areas like research grants approval, conferences and

training aids, payment of honorarium and so on, since these are the key areas that ignite the conflict between lecturers and management.

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